Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

184 343 [422] [735] side are the few poor possessions of the inmates. The clothes are nearly always on their bodies, and one finds only a few rags, some cooking utensils, and the like. The floor is damp and poorly plastered. At Kymore we saw a few houses that even a dog would not consider worthy of entering, which sheltered families. One wonders how in the heat and the rain and the cold a human being can live in such places.

A number of the better grade houses have two rooms. These houses have some veranda space, and here are examples of outside measurements of some of the better types:

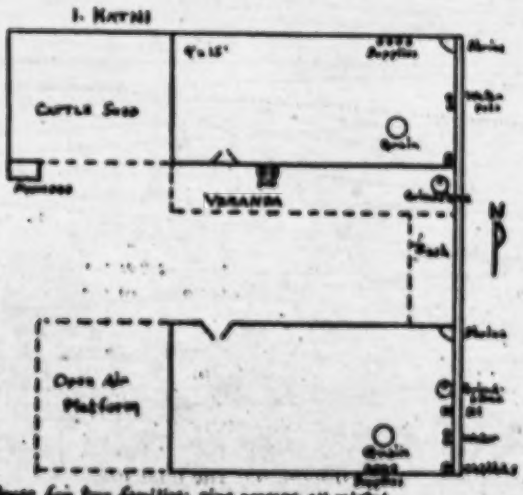
26′×7′; 35′×18′; 40′×20′; 39′×23′;
12′×16′; 15′×16′; 15′×12′; 10′×15′.

In one of the above houses that had two rooms one measured 10′×5′ and the other 10′×15′ In these better houses the height of the mud wall is six to seven feet above the level of the floor. Some of the meaner huts measured 5′×10′ and 6′×12′, with walls about three [592] feet high. In one of these measuring 6′×12′ we found five people living, in another of a similar size four. At Kymore the huts were about seven feet long and three feet wide.

See figures 2 and 3 showing diagrams of typical Kol houses.

231 342 353 542

GROUND PLANS OF KOL HOUSES



Houses for two families: nine persons, all related. Walls are of mud; roof grass thatched.

Fig. 2.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

Those who own cattle usually provide for them in a place separate from their own dwellings. They are occasionally given a place on the veranda, but usually a rude hut is erected to one side of the house where the cattle are housed during the night and afforded some measure of protection. In some of the more jungly sections back in the Kaimur hills, we found that a group of houses usually had a thorny stockade built around it.[1] There was one entrance for all, cattle and men. This is for protection from wild animals and an occasional outlaw. In the industrial sections attached to cities like Jubbulpore the Kols are sometimes put in the regular workers' lines; or are at other times

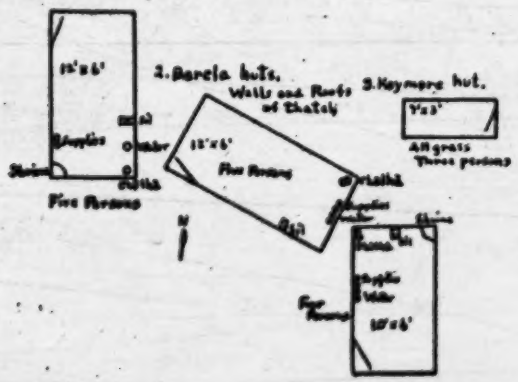


Fig. 3

given a plot of ground and certain materials for building purposes (mostly tiles) and allowed to construct their own village. Some fairly decent houses result, but usually there is no system to the narrow winding paths that lead one amongst the village houses. In Kymore the Cement company is building brick accommodations for their Kol workers. Recently one of the grass huts caught fire while the parents were away at work, and before it could be checked, it had spread to other huts and a number of small children were burned to death.

The problems of sanitation are the same with the Kols as they are all over village India. Filth of all varieties is thrown on the manure pits right alongside the houses, and flies and other insects breed prolifically.

1 See Plate IV.

l:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

food made by boiling the pulse and the rice together. When this is prepared she offers each of the male guests a portion of it and they in turn give her from two to four annas which she is allowed to keep for her own use. Following this there is a big feast at the boy's house and the night is spent in chatting, singing and dancing. 585 [262]

(5) *Raman* or *Rauna:* Final Break with her Family. There now remains one more thing, which is the simplest of all to do: to bring the bride back for good. The *raman* is the last part of the cycle and is the taking possession of the girl and the bringing her for the last time to the bridegroom's house. The time for this is set by the *pandit* and there is said to be very little ceremony or no ceremony at all. The bridegroom simply goes with one or two male friends and the girl is brought back to his home in a *palki* and "they live happily ever after." She is now a member of the new household but may come and go at will between the two places. [592]

3. WIDOW REMARRIAGE: (*Kari hui*; *Path*). It is nevertheless well recognized that a widow may be married again though for the Kols such unions are not marriages in the strict sense. We were often told that while a man may be married more than once, a woman can be married not more than once. 587 [581]

The Kols recognize two possible forms of widow marriage: a widower marrying a widow and a bachelor taking a widow as his wife. The latter form is the least common. Some say that a union like this should never be dignified by the term marriage, for while a Kol bachelor may "keep" a widow he may never marry her and the union has no legal standing. Others call it but half a marriage. Such a liason is never allowed if the Kol bachelor is living in his parents' home; it is only after he leaves the home that such a thing is possible. As long as this widow is kept by him the *panch* sees that he does not contract a real marriage with anyone else. [583] [836] [581] [623]

There are, however, traces of a sort of legalization of this procedure, but this really consists in first making the Kol a widower! If he wishes to marry the widow he must first consult the *panch*. They will usually do their best to try to dissuade him, but if he persists they tell him what he will have to do in the way of penalties. If he is willing it has to be ascertained whether the girl also is agreeable. If she is not, the thing is off, but the Kol youth would probably not have made the request without being sure of her consent. The *panch* then arranges a mock wedding for him, and he is "married" to some inanimate thing. There are several forms possible; one is that the bachelor should be made 587 588 [623]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIAL UNIT: THE FAMILY

THE KOL FAMILY. The basis of Kol society is found in the family. This family is patrilinear and patrilocal, with a recognition of the bilateral kinship group because important social relations are observed with the kin on both sides. Nevertheless the household usually contains only dependent members from the father's side, but there are no taboos for the other side of the family and visiting is allowed back and forth freely and without hindrance. No trace was found of a rupture in the parent-in-law relationship and no restrictions either in talking or associating were traced. In all, however, the family stands out as a distinct unit separate from the wider life of the community.

In a typical Kol family under the one roof will usually be found the husband, the wife (or wives), unmarried children, and occasionally some dependent member or members of the father's family, such as a widowed grandparent. Soon after marriage the Kol son usually sets up a home for himself. In the more primitive sections it is unusual to find a married son and his wife living with his parents. In the more Hinduized communities, where the Kols are better off and can afford more elaborate houses, married sons and their wives were frequently found living with the boy's parents. In one such home in Barela, for example, there were two married sons and their wives living with the boys' parents. This seems though to be an imitation of the Hindu family system, rather than a true Kol institution. The older dependents are found in the house only if their own homes are broken up by death. One occasionally finds an old couple living together in a little hut, and when one or the other dies the surviving member goes to live in a son's or another relative's house. In one centre, however, four such persons were found, each living alone in a little hut. They were either not wanted or had no relatives with whom they could reside.

In Barela and Kharara Ghat a survey was made of the number of people in each home or sheltered under one roof. The average number of people per house, excluding four houses where there was one each who was somehow *persona non grata* with relatives, was 3.9. In Kharara Ghat the average came to 4.8 persons per house. The 1931 Central Provinces Census Report reveals that primitive tribes average 3.8 children per family. The distribution of people was as follows:

[p. 101]

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1. *Barela*: *Persons reported*: *Houses reporting*: *Total for class.*

9	.. 1	..	9
8	.. 2	..	16
7	.. 1	..	7
6	.. 5	..	30
5	.. 10	..	50
4	.. 8	..	32
3	.. 16	..	48
2	.. 12	..	24
1	.. 4	..	4
	59	..	220

2. *Kharara Ghat*:

9	.. 2	..	18
8	.. ..	..	..
7	.. 2	..	14
6	.. 5	..	30
5	.. 6	..	30
4	.. 6	..	24
3	.. 4	..	12
2	.. 4	..	8
	29	..	136

In the case of the Barela Kols the lower average is due to two causes: the first is that the town is near the main road and as the Kols are much more Hinduized as a community there is a natural loss of household members who leave home for work in Jubbulpore. The second is that the health of the Barela Kols is far less satisfactory than of those in Kharara Ghat, for the town is much more open to infection, and illnesses are more numerous.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN. The place of women among the Kols can be said to be fairly high. There is a wholesome sense of equality among the sexes. The women do not keep themselves in seclusion (*parda*), and are generally free to go about on any errand. In Hinduized sections they cover their heads in the presence of men or when they are outside their houses, but under primitive conditions they are not so particular. In a general sense the husband is the main authority